



How the Grinch Saved Translation *(with apologies to Dr. Seuss)*

All the writers in Doc-ville
 Liked documentation a lot...
 But the Grinch who was funding it,
 Really did NOT!
 To him all the docs were a great aggravation.
 Especially the money he spent on translation.
 He hated translations!
 The whole translating season!
 Now, please don't ask why.
 No one quite knows the reason.
 It could be the Grinch didn't know the whole story.
 It could be, perhaps,
 that they gave him no glory.
 But I think that the most likely reason of all
 May be that his budget was two sizes too small.
 He stood there on ship dates, hating the docs,
 And wishing translations just came in a box.
 Then he growled,
 with his Grinch fingers nervously drumming,
 "I JUST have to keep the translations from coming!
 "Why hasn't English been fine up to now?!"
 "I MUST stop translating so much!... But HOW?"
 Then he got an idea! A most splendid idea!
 A wicked and wonderful Grinchy idea!
 So the Grinch swooped right down, with vigor and vim
 To give all his docs a pre-localize trim.
 All the writers were busy with deadlines and such
 When he hit the docs with a thunderous touch.
 "This is job number one" the old Grinch, he just hissed,
 There's plenty of stuff here that just won't be missed.
 He dug in quite deep, that miserly Grinch.
 The text was so dense, it gave hardly one inch.
 He got stuck only once, for a sentence or two.
 Then he pulled out the start,
 middle and end of page two,
 Where the little Doc nouns were all grouped in a row.
 "These nouns," the Grinch grinned,
 "are the first things to go!"
 Then he slithered and slunk, like a man on two missions,
 Around the whole doc to remove repetitions!
 Openers! Closers! And meaningless headers!
 Rewrites! And duplicates! And extra letters!
 Then he slunk to the intros. He took them out whole!
 Pulling out gibberish - he was on quite a roll!
 When he turned to the grammar,
 it took a sound thrashing!
 He spent so much effort rewriting and hashing!
 Then he chucked all the verbiage and
 exclaimed with a shout.
 "And NOW!" he was grinning, "I'll get rid of the DOUBT!"



And the Grinch hit Delete and began roundly cutting,
 Taking out all of the if-, and- or but-ing.
 Then he re-did the job with one guide,
 then the next.
 He took it all out, every bit of bad text:
 The extras! The clusters!
 Inconsistent summation!
 Jargon! And drivel of every creation!
 But the writers in Doc-ville all started to say,
 With regret for the trimmings the Grinch took away,
 "Pooh-pooh on his doc, that was no way
 to treat it!
 "He'll find out that none of the users
 will read it!
 "Their mouths will hang open a minute or two
 "Then the users in Use-ville will all cry
 BOO-HOO.
 "That's a noise," grinned the writers,
 "That we simply MUST hear!"
 So they paused. And the Grinch put his
 hand to his ear.
 And they did hear a sound coming in from out there...
 It started in low. Then it rose in the air...
 But the sound wasn't sad!
 Why this sound sounded merry!
 It couldn't be so! But it was merry! VERY!
 The writers all stared and they popped their eyes!
 Then they shook! What they saw was a shocking surprise!
 The users were reading the docs, large and small,
 Reading without any extras at all!
 He hadn't stopped users from reading! They read!
 Somehow or other, they read without dread!
 And the writers stood puzzling: "How could it be so?"
 "The users found out what they needed to know!
 "They read it with hardly a buzzword or cluster!
 "They read it without all the bulk and the bluster!"
 And they puzzled for hours, and they puzzled some more.
 Then they thought of something they hadn't before!
 "Our messages don't need that bulk, we confess.
 "Maybe meaning... perhaps... comes in saying much less!"
 And what happened then...? Well, in Doc-ville, they say,
 that the Doc-ers' budget grew three sizes that day!
 For, you see, with the Grinch's assistance they found
 there was now much more funding to go all around.
 The Grinch, too, soon realized translation's no chore.
 You just have to write less and less more and more!

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